

EARLY CHILDHOOD TRANSITION PLANNING

At some time in our lives, transitions happen for all of us. Remember the first day of school? Or the day you brought your new baby home? Successful transitions require planning ahead and working with others who can help.



Each family's culture brings a unique set of values, beliefs, and customs that may affect how you help the family plan and the choices they make.

In the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), the Family Service Coordinator assists the family in setting goals based on the family's priorities and concerns, and identifying services and supports that the family needs to reach the goals.

During transition, the Family Service Coordinator will help identify people and agencies that can help the family know what resources their child may be eligible for. Some of the services a family may want may not be available in their community. In that case, the Family Service Coordinator will help the family find other ways to help their child continue to grow and learn through activities in daily life, with family members, friends, or other community resources.

As you help a family plan for the future, ask the family:

- What do you hope and dream for your child?
- What does your child need now to grow and develop?

- Where do you want your child to play and learn?

Choices after Early Intervention

While families are in Early Intervention (EI), Family Service Coordinators maintain frequent contact with the family. The IFSP team, including the Service Coordinator and the family will develop outcomes and activities to help the child grow and learn, address the child's health needs, and address the needs of the family. Family Service Coordinators assist families in identifying resources for when their child is no longer enrolled in EI.

Some ideas to consider:

- School district pre-kindergarten programs
- Charter schools
- Classes for children, such as art or music
- Head Start
- Friends with young children
- Child care settings
- Parent's Day Out programs
- Community parks
- Community recreation programs
- Neighborhood play groups
- Private therapy
- Library story hours

Family Service Coordinators share information with families about what might be needed for a child to participate in any of these activities. For example, some places may require a birth certificate or medical/ immunization information. Be sure to discuss with the family in advance issues such as:

- special accommodations the child may need,
- how the child will get to and from the activity or program,

- the program's policy for giving and storing medication,
- any fees they may charge, and
- any special diet restrictions.

When a child is transitioning, families may want to address in the new setting:

- Assistive technology needs
- Tools to help children be successful in a school day
- Helping their child adjust to being at school and not in the home setting

School districts must also plan for children who may be eligible for special education services. Some children enrolled in EI may be eligible for these services when they are three years old.



Transition planning helps families be fully informed about transition options available in the community where the child lives. It can also help assist the family in addressing the child's developmental needs for the future.

To Plan Ahead...

Your family can:

- Imagine what kinds of activities they would like to see their child doing.
- Imagine an "ideal" day for their child and consider what steps are needed to make it happen.
- Discuss what types of programs or services they wish to pursue.
- Decide if they want a friend, relative, or other person to participate in the transition conference or meeting with them.

The Family Service Coordinator can:

- Offer your family information about transition planning and related community resources.
- Help your family in planning transition steps.
- Explain the differences between EI and other programs.
- Invite appropriate people from other agencies to come to a transition conference or meeting.

For additional transition information or resources, please talk with a FIT family Service Coordinator

For additional transition related information or resources, please go to:
New Mexico Early Childhood Transition Initiative
<http://www.cdd.unm.edu/ecln/Transition>

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<http://archive.nmhealth.org/ddsd/nmfit/>